



Valley Broadcast Legends

Oral Histories

2018/010/004

Oral interview of

Anita Fein

February 10, 2017

Interviewer: Beth Ruyak

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Anita Frimkess Fein was one of Sacramento television's first female news video photographers. She worked at KCRA TV in Sacramento for 10 years, first as an intern and then as a staff news photographer and video editor. Before that, she studied at UC Santa Barbara, UC Berkeley, and UCLA, earning a degree in anthropology. Her anthropology training and news coverage came together to allow her to "document her culture." Today Anita works as a full-time still photographer.

Anita Fein: I was a graduate student at Sac State. My friend Sandy Helen [phonetic], who was newsroom secretary, got me into the newsroom as an intern. I interned for a year at KCRA. Lois Coteen [phonetic] hired me into promotion, I worked there for a year and a half, and when there was a vacancy in film in the newsroom, I applied for the job and was hired. I worked as a news photographer at KCRA from 1978 till I resigned in 1986, but I continued to freelance for them for another two years, so I had about a ten-year career as a news photographer, and it was a spectacular career.

I was born and raised in Los Angeles. My father was a partner in a portrait studio in L.A. My mother was a very high-powered insurance executive at a time that women were not in that business, and I very much had a taste of both worlds. I loved to sit in the darkroom and watch my father print and develop film, load film. I loved the darkroom. My mother, I worked at her office summers. I hated office work [*Laughs*], and that was pretty much what was open to me as a high school girl and for college summers in the 1950s and '60s. Those were the careers that were open.

I went to three University of California campuses: Santa Barbara, Berkeley, and I graduated from UCLA. My major was anthropology, and I loved it, I love studying other cultures, and I was going off to do fieldwork in South America when I was nineteen, when I met my husband. I traveled through Europe by myself alone, came back, resumed my relationship with Larry, we got married, and I graduated with a B.A. in anthropology.

Later, after two babies and going back to school to get a master's degree, I realized that I really wanted to be in the arts and I really wanted to shoot film, and then when I got hired at KCRA as a news photographer, it all came together. I was documenting my culture as an anthropologist in a nonjudgmental way every single day, and I knew that I was doing important work. It was my dream job and I loved it, and the only reason I resigned is my husband had had a massive heart attack, and they wouldn't give me a leave of absence, and I needed time off with my husband. So I resigned and have continued all these years as a still photographer, doing occasional video, but one project after another as a still photographer.

[0:03:22.6]

Ruyak: Can I go back to that time when you were, let's say, in college and traveling, maybe even in high school? Were you an amateur photographer? Were you taking pictures along the way then?

[0:03:35.5]

Fein: No. I tried. My father gave me one of his cameras. I was a Mariner Girl Scout. I was a Girl Scout, of course, and we were canoeing down the Colorado River, and he showed me how to use his—an early 35-millimeter camera. I took it on the trip and dropped it in the water, and I fished it out. He said, “You should have left it, Anita. Could have gotten the insurance.”

No, I wasn't. I'm not naturally mechanical. If you show me how to use it, I can use it, but I don't have an innate ability with equipment. I do have a very good relationship with equipment. I'm kind to it. It has a soul. When we were working at KCRA—I was just talking to Fred Harris yesterday—the fact that when we shared cameras in the early years of ENG, when they were always broken and needed tweaking, I thought it was because the cameras were confused because so many people were using them.

[Laughs] Fred said, “No, other people just abuse them.” [Laughs] Anyway.

[0:04:44.4]

Ruyak: So that care for the equipment probably came from your early years with your dad, and respect for the process.

[0:04:51.2]

Fein: Yes, yes. I am a process person. I realize that you don't know what you're going to get when you start out, but you just start out, and you follow the steps, put the pieces into the puzzle, and you get a finished product that way.

[0:05:09.3]

Ruyak: You went to the newsroom for an internship. Somehow somebody identified something in you and directed you.

[0:05:35.6]

Fein: Stan gave me the position of production assistant on a drought series that he was doing.

[0:05:43.6]

Ruyak: Stan Atkinson.

[0:05:44.6]

Fein: Stan Atkinson, in 1975 or '76 when I was an intern, and he was delighted. I booked all of his interviews, I participated in it 100 percent, and we had a really good drought series, which included putting bricks in his toilets in Governors Square in his apartment to save water, to displace water.

Anyway, management was Pete Langlois [phonetic] and Duane Borovich [phonetic], and so they saw me, the work that I did with Stan, they saw the work that I did in promotion

with Lois Coteen. I did a number of thirty- and sixty-second spots with their news anchors, Stan and Mary Richardson. I think Heidi Tong [phonetic] and Mike Boyd, I did promos for all of those, and they liked what I did.

So when I interviewed for the job, Stan Drury [phonetic] left to go to work in San Francisco. He was a cameraman there. And I interviewed for his position. They knew I was qualified, they had seen my work, and they said, "But, Anita, we're worried that you're not strong enough and you're not aggressive enough."

And I said, "That's not a problem. Just watch." *[Laughs]* And I got the job.

[0:07:15.9]

Ruyak: That's a great story. How were you trained to use the equipment, and was there anything said about the fact that very few women ever did this job?

[0:07:27.3]

Fein: A friend of mine was a newsman, a news photographer at Channel 13. He showed me how to work his CP-16 film camera. I was very familiar with film, and so it was not a problem. I learned editing. My master's degree is in communication studies, and it's all about message design, hot and cold messages, stories with a beginning, a middle, and an end, how you put something together that makes sense visually. So I had the education, and then it was just practice, practice, practice every single day, using a light meter, a reflective light meter, for exposing film.

When I first started out, Bill Harvey [phonetic], who was six-feet-five, I was standing there, he comes and he puts his hands on my shoulders and he says, "Shoot that," like that. But once I started working with people, they had confidence in me. There are so many things that a reporter can't tell you to do or doesn't even think to do, but I know that it's important for telling the story, all the fill-in shots, all the things that are needed to tell the story, and I did those regularly without being asked or told to do them. And I think I was well liked. I was requested for stories a lot. People asked, "Can I work with Anita today?" And that's what I did for ten years. *[Laughs]*

[0:09:19.1]

Ruyak: Did you hear feedback about the fact that you worked collaboratively? You didn't just shoot, but you did have this eye for shaping the full story and somewhat of a producer's mind too.

[0:09:32.2]

Fein: One of my gripes was that photographers didn't get credit for what they did. A particularly difficult one was this long cosmetic surgery series that I did with Margaret Pelley [phonetic] that was eyelids, breasts, facelift, and liposuction, and we probably did two or three weeks of shooting, trips to Newport Beach and Sacramento. I shot it, I edited it. Margaret wasn't in the room. I was in the room for every surgery, smelling the

cauterizing, smelling the blood, almost passing out once, it got so strong. Margaret didn't participate in any of that. She looked at the footage. And then at the end of the series, she never mentioned my name in the entire series. I felt burned on that one. Most of the time I just let it roll off, but that one I had put a lot into, and not to get any credit at all.

Stan Atkinson was wonderful about giving credit. I worked a lot with Pete Fuentos [phonetic]. They're storyteller. Most of the photographers didn't want to work with him because it was really hard. You did double the amount of shooting and cutaways for every single response, many, many setups, three, four times as many setups for a shoot with him as with other people. Pete took me on my best trip, which was a trip to China, following a Frisbee team through China. Anyway, Pete was really good about—some of the reporters were good about it.

They all knew. Otis Turner [phonetic] used to take *forever* to write a standup, and I would be there sitting with him, suggesting lines, and he'd read it to me, and I'd say, "Well, that doesn't flow very well. How about like this?" And we'd go back and forth till finally, "Let me shoot the standup so we can get on," and anyway. [Laughs] No, I think it was just accepted that that's how I worked, and I was fun to work with.

[0:12:01.1]

Ruyak: Was there a novelty to the fact that you were a camerawoman?

[0:12:06.5]

Fein: Not a novelty. I had to push my way through and in. Intimidating the first day, but after that, I got—they used to—they called it a "gang bang." Whenever the governor would walk out or Willie Brown, Speaker, everybody would gather around and shove their microphones in the face, and they'd just start. And the first time it happened to me, it's like, "Can I get in here? I'm short. Can I just sit and get in the front, and you can shoot over my head?" Yes, I got in.

Once I got in, after that, it was everybody would gather around and I'd say, "Wait a minute, Governor. Does everybody have their microphone up? Is everybody ready? Okay. Okay, go ahead, Governor," and then they would start. And it was a much more civilized approach to grabbing somebody as they walked out the door. [Laughs]

[0:13:09.0]

Ruyak: That kind of leadership seemed to come naturally for you and, in fact, you had union leadership within the station, didn't you?

[0:13:17.9]

Fein: Yes, after Ed—well, Bud Harmon had been shop steward for the union and then passed the mantle on to me right at a time when President Reagan had—no, he was

governor—had gutted the National Labor Relations Board and they had gone really pro-management, and Kelly Broadcasting thought they could get rid of the union.

I was shop steward for four years, and it was an important position. I represented people. In reading through my notes, I was at disciplinary hearings when reporters were sanctioned for breaking rules or insubordination. I represented members. I led the struggle for lighter equipment. When we moved from our lovely 18-pound CP-16 cameras to our 25-, 30-pound TK-76s, and we added the recorders and the battery belts, I led the fight for lighter equipment. The Bay Area solved it by having all two-person crews, but we did not have two, and they had a weight limit of 40 pounds. One of our photographers in Stockton posed for the picture of what the well-dressed photographer looks like with battery belt extra and—

[0:15:08.7]

Ruyak: How much weight was it when—

[0:15:12.5]

Fein: Sixty pounds.

[0:15:13.3]

Ruyak: That's what you carried?

[0:15:14.3]

Fein: I regularly carried 60 pounds, and I talked to OSHA and I talked to—actually, the City of Sacramento, they wouldn't let their garbage collectors lift more than 65 pounds because they said, "We know it causes bodily injury." And we were regularly carrying 60 pounds of equipment with a 20-pound tripod and the camera and the—and I often carried all that weight. *[Laughs]*

[0:15:44.6]

Ruyak: Do you have any lingering physical issues because of that?

[0:15:51.9]

Fein: Well, yes, I do, but I can't blame it 100 percent on that. I have a list of all of the news photographers in our station at the time, how much they exercised, who had a separated shoulder, who had—all of the ailments. None of the men would complain about the ailments, but most of them had back problems, shoulder, neck, arm, arm numbness. Most of them had some kinds of problems, and they went away as we got lighter equipment. Lighter equipment did become a priority, and we had good equipment.

[0:16:36.6]

Ruyak: How and why was the union important to your job, Anita?

[0:16:41.7]

Fein: It was the first time I had ever earned a living wage. I had worked in secretarial jobs all my life and, you know, a few other things, but this was a man's wage, and it felt good and I earned it. *[Laughs]*

[0:17:01.3]

Ruyak: Do you remember your wages?

[0:17:03.0]

Fein: Yes, I have all my paystubs. I can show you. I would have to tell you. We got increases as the time went, but I can show you all, yes. When I left, I was earning 30,000 a year, when I left in '86. When I started, I think I was probably earning 24[000].

[0:17:23.4]

Ruyak: You mentioned something about all your notes. You are remarkable in your bookkeeping, your notekeeping, the details from your ten years as a cameraperson.

[0:17:34.8]

Fein: Well, that is throughout my life. That's how I do all of my life, all of my—if you look in my studio in my darkroom, you will see that my negatives are filed and my prints are filed, and I can find—and I have gathered here—I can find just about anything in my history in a short amount of time.

[0:17:59.0]

Ruyak: Tell me about some of the records that you have from your photographer days.

[0:18:04.8]

Fein: Records? I have all of my—

[0:18:07.1]

Ruyak: Don't go there.

[0:18:08.4]

Fein: Okay. Oh. *[Laughs]*

[0:18:10.0]

Ruyak: No. If you could just describe what your lists are.

[0:18:13.8]

Fein: I have my daily—I have all of my daily assignments. I have all of the notes, most everything that came down from management in the form of flyers or whatever.

[0:18:33.4]

Ruyak: There is that memorable story about the first midwife birth. Would you tell that story?

[0:18:38.7]

Fein: Yes. Came into work one morning, my assignment editor said, “You’re going to do a story on the first legal birth by a midwife.” The California legislature had passed a law saying that midwives could deliver babies with some supervision by a doctor, but he didn’t have to be there. So they said, “You’d better get going, you and Sue Pearson [phonetic]. The mother’s in labor now.”

So we took off for Lotus, 75 miles up into the foothills for the delivery. I had one 400-foot roll of film that I had to budget because you could not shoot more than 400 feet of film on a story. You just couldn’t. It was hard. All day long, from like 10:30 in the morning till she finally gave birth at 9:30 at night, I had pictures of the laboring, pictures of the midwife, pictures of all of us sitting around waiting.

At 9:30 she delivers, we wait, she delivers the afterbirth, we jump in the car, and race back down the hill. I’m driving 80 miles an hour. Sue Pearson is frantically writing the story as we’re driving. We get back to the station, I rush my film to—they kept the lab open. They processed the film in fifteen minutes. It came out at about a quarter to 11:00. I got the script from Sue, I edited it. It was the lead story for section two of the 11 o’clock news. It was a great experience.

Came into work the next day, and there’s a note on my editing bench that says, “Anita, see me immediately.”

So I go into Steve Haskins’ [phonetic] office, and he says, “Anita, you showed a vagina on television.”

And I said, “Steve, where do you think babies are born?” *[Laughs]*

The call list was glowing. People called in and said, “I never thought I would see such a thing on television.”

Anyway, they ran the story again at noon and at 5 o’clock, but they edited the vagina out. *[Laughs]*

[0:21:09.4]

Ruyak: Tell me some other stories, some of the other most memorable, for better or for worse.

[0:21:16.1]

Fein: For better, for worse. I did a lot of famous people that were really very memorable. A drive up to Tahoe with Betty Vasquez [phonetic] to interview Sammy Davis Jr., who was a lovely person, and then, again, driving back in a snowstorm that was scary. The news photographers drove. The cars were assigned to us. The reporters were not allowed to drive our cars, and so I was always driving fast and looking for cops because I was always speeding back to get the story in.

[0:21:57.3]

Ruyak: Wow.

[0:21:58.5]

Fein: I turned gray working at KCRA. I have a sister that's two years older than me that's just now turning gray, but I was gray by the time I left KCRA. [Laughs]

[0:22:10.9]

Ruyak: So you're not joking. You think it did add to the stress and the aging in your life?

[0:22:15.5]

Fein: It was incredibly high stress, always racing against time. There was always a deadline. It didn't matter. It didn't matter. There was always a deadline. [Laughs]

[0:22:32.9]

Ruyak: Anita, what did you love about the job?

[0:22:35.8]

Fein: I loved working outside. I loved starting fresh every single day. I'd had caseloads before; I was an L.A. County social worker, and I hated office work. I couldn't stand having a caseload that never ended. And working in news was a fresh start every single day. I loved working with the variety of people, both reporters and the subjects, really interesting stories. I learned how to fertilize broccoli, doing a story on plant genetics in Davis, and I'm watching the woman take a paintbrush and take pollen. I learned a huge amount about everything.

My kids were disappointed when I'd come back from a story, like, "You did Mario Andretti today? Did you get his autograph?"

"No."

"Joe Namath?"

"No."

"All of the 49ers?"

“No.” *[Laughs]*

I actually liked shooting. I shot a lot of sports. Boxing was my favorite. All the action was right here. Because in golf, baseball, where did the ball go? When the football players would hide the ball, you pull out wide to find the ball. *[Laughs]* But I did like shooting sports.

I liked all of the work, it was all interesting, and I felt that I was documenting my culture, and I felt that I was showing people—I tried to show people in a favorable light. Some of the stories, it was hard. When you’re doing a story about somebody who’s a hoarder and you’re walking in their house, it’s kind of horrifying, but you can’t make it horrifying. *[Laughs]* I did try to make people look good, I didn’t make people look bad on purpose, and I was kind and made friends easily, and I just loved the work.

[0:25:03.3]

Ruyak: In my experience working with you, I knew that you had been on the frontlines of feminism as a younger woman, and we talked a lot about your attitudes about men and women, but as I hear you talk now about your career, you don’t think of it in a feminist way. It was your job and your profession. But you must have seen changes happen in those ten years, both in what the job was and in the gender shift in the job.

[0:25:35.1]

Fein: Yes, I did. There was a lot of hostility from the other male news photographers. Harry Sweet [phonetic] was willing to help me, but nobody—but gradually, once they got to know me—I was a threat. Here was a little woman doing the same job as them and earning the same money as them, and maybe doing a better job than them. *[Laughs]* But when they realized that I really wasn’t a threat, and especially after I became shop steward, they knew that they could come to me and that I would protect their—that I was looking out for their interests.

Workmen’s comp cases, disciplinary cases, I was there for all of it. I was there—the union contract negotiations from ’82, ’83, ’84, I went into San Francisco on contract negotiations. It was a time when they were trying to get rid of the union. We had three decertification elections, and each time John Kelly got more and more angry because each time the camerapeople voted to keep the union.

The station would not pay for education. They did not think that photographers needed education, and I knew we all did, and so I went to both of these workshops, paid for them myself, the company gave me the time off and let me bring my equipment with me, but I paid all of my expenses for both workshops, and then came back and taught the people that I worked with what I had learned.

[0:27:36.6]

Ruyak: You're still a news watcher, I'm sure of that.

[0:27:40.4]

Fein: Oh, I am.

[0:27:41.4]

Ruyak: What do you think about where the industry is now and where is broadcasting going?

[0:27:46.8]

Fein: I have been very saddened to hear about broadcasting now, from both Tom Duhane [phonetic], a personal conversation with him when I went to his retirement party, and hearing the guy who spoke at VBL, Ward Kopple [phonetic], talk about how today there is no time to process anything. It's all instant. You show up and it's being directed from the newsroom. You have to Tweet, you have to Twitter, you have to tell them everything before you even know the story. There's no time to reflect on the meaning of what you're gathering and seeing. It's all instant, instant, with no time to see the background or the whole picture.

When we were doing news, we *did* get the picture. You *did* have time to—I mean, you were racing, you were always up against the clock with deadlines, but the reporter was writing the story in the car as you were driving back, and nobody was second-guessing and telling you what to do in the field from the office. And that's what I heard from Tom Duhane and from Ward Kopple about how with the Twitters and the Tweets and all the stuff going on now, that they're being micromanaged from the newsroom. And that's not how you gather news. [Laughs]

I think I knew back then that what I was doing back was important and needed to be preserved and saved. I have a gold A pendant that Harry Sweet gave me one Christmas. I was the only news photographer besides him that would file film. Nobody else could be bothered. They would have thrown it all out. Harry knew it should be saved. I knew it should be saved. And Harry and I did all of the film filing when we were filing film. I knew that news was important, that ten years, twenty years, thirty years from now, people would want to come back and see what—I mean, I have a list of famous—what people had to say then.

I'm going to throw in another memorable story. At UC Davis, Abba Eban was, I don't know, Prime Minister of Israel and was speaking at UC Davis, and the Palestinian students were demonstrating there and burned an Israeli flag. I knew that was important stuff that should be saved. I have the film outs of that. I don't have the story, but I kept the outs. And film has a life of its own.

Once Lois Hart and I were doing—before she left to go to CNN, were doing a story on prostitutes down at Fifth and T, which was the stroll at that time, and we found a prostitute, wanted to talk to her, and her pimp came along and said, “No, you’ve got to pay me.”

And Lois said, “No, we don’t pay for stories.”

So we did the story, came back, and at the time, we didn’t have company cars. I was driving my own Honda Civic, and the back window was broken, and somebody had reached in and taken the money out of my purse. People described who did it, and it was a black man wearing a ski hat. And then the cops called me, I came back down there, and “Is this the man we got?”

I said, “No, that’s not the man.” I have a picture of the man. I happen to have a picture of Billy Ray [phonetic] whatever his name was. When we were crossing the street and he was trying to get money out of Lois Hart, I was filming. I said, “Here’s a frame of the film.”

The cop said, “Oh, that’s Billy Ray. He’s out on parole.” [Laughs] I went to court and I testified. Film! You know, if I didn’t have that little piece of film—but I had it, and he went back to jail. [Laughs]

And I was grateful, and I said to the judge, “He was good. He only took the money. He didn’t take any of my credit cards.” [Laughs] I appreciated him. And the insurance covered the cost of the window. [Laughs]

[0:32:38.7]

Ruyak: You and I have an age difference. When I was working with you, I felt like I was your little sister or that you would have been a mentor, someone that had taken another person under their wing. I remember feeling that in those car rides you taught me a lot. You were trying to show me the world and help me understand a bigger perspective.

[0:33:06.3]

Fein: I taught a lot of new up-and-coming people, and I’ve been looking. Lester Holt—

[0:33:14.1]

Ruyak: Really.

[0:33:15.6]

Fein: —was an intern, and I’ve been looking for when I worked with him. I taught Will Hereford [phonetic], who was a photographer in Stockton for a long time. Tom Sullivan, who was on the air, I did the first story with him that he had ever done, how to do a standup. “Come up, here’s how you do a standup, Tom,” you know.

I taught a whole—and at the time in the early eighties, KCRA was a training ground for NBC, and if they got a tape from somebody they'd like, they'd say, "Go to work at KCRA for a year or two, learn the business, and then move on." Heidi Tong [phonetic], Sarah Wallace [phonetic] moved on to New York. Susan Goldwater Gregory [phonetic] moved on to I don't know where. Kim Hendrew [phonetic], I think went to Atlanta. A whole flock of young upcoming reporters, they'd give them to me to break them in, and then they would work with the rougher guys, the guys that weren't so easy to work with.

[0:34:30.9]

Ruyak: Then let me finish by saying thank you.

[0:34:34.3]

Fein: Oh, you're welcome. It was a pleasure. [*Laughs*]

[0:34:37.0]

Ruyak: For all the ways, though, that you contributed not only to the people you worked with, but to the business, too, Anita, because you were so passionate and you gave so much to it.

[0:34:47.3]

Fein: Thank you. Thank you.

[0:34:50.2]

Ruyak: Talk more about photographers not getting credit in the work and the attitude back then toward photographers compared to reporters.

[0:34:58.7]

Fein: I think that there was a holdover from print journalism that words were more important, and I believe that management thought that reporters and their words were more important than photographers and their pictures. Photographers routinely did not get any credit. Reporters did not mention who shot the footage, unless it was something really incredible or outstanding. But it was rare that my name ever got mentioned on television.

Dan Shively [phonetic], I flew in the helicopter every single week, or more than once, I mean sometimes multiple times in a week, but everybody—they kept the helicopter up in the air during the news shows for breaking news, so I was—anyway, Dan Shively would sometimes mention who the photographer was, and that was nice. My husband and kids would know that I was going to be home late because I was doing a live shot for the news. [*Laughs*] But I felt that we should have gotten more credit than we did. But it was okay, I wasn't working for credit. I was working for a paycheck, and I liked what I was doing.

[0:36:29.9]

Ruyak: Say again what years you worked and tell me how the technology changed during that time.

[0:36:37.9]

Fein: I began work at KCRA as an intern in 1975, I believe, and worked the '75-'76 year as an intern. News was shooting 16-millimeter film at the time. When I first began working at the station as an intern in 1975-'76, 16-milimeter film is what was being shot for news. They would do ABC interlocks, sound on one piece of film tape and picture on another.

By the time I was hired in 1978, they had just phased out ABC interlocks as a regular thing, and there was a mag stripe on the film, twenty-four frames apart from the picture. So when you were editing, you had to be very careful to keep that twenty-four frames so that the picture and the sound would sync up.

About the end of '78, early '80, the first ENG cameras came in. I didn't use the first one, but I used the second one, which was a TK-76, a very, very heavy, cumbersome camera. I did not like it. I didn't trust it. I loved film. I loved the tactileness of film, rather than this magnetic image that would erase itself accidentally in the machine and wrinkle in the machine. Film was so reliable, and I knew film would last 100 years. So I was kicking and screaming as we moved from film to tape, but we did.

Then Ikegami cameras, which was the camera I loved and was my camera for the rest of the time that I was there, not—well, I actually ended up shooting a beta cam also. But the technology changed tremendously. Weights were still pretty heavy. Battery belt was still 12 pounds, extra tapes, extra batteries, tripod was 20 pounds. But tape was here to stay, and I learned it, and I learned how to edit tape, and that was the change. I still see beta cams in use.

[0:39:24.3]

Ruyak: Let's go to another remarkable experience for you. How about 1984? What does that make you think of?

[0:39:36.4]

Fein: The Democratic Convention in San Francisco. We didn't spend the night there; we drove back and forth from Sacramento to San Francisco every day. I came into work one morning, and Jim Drennan [phonetic] handed me the plum assignment that he had saved for me, which was to shoot the nomination of Geraldine Ferraro in the San Francisco Opera House, and I was on the first balcony, had my camera set up, and I was rolling tape with tears running down my eyes, I was so moved to see the first woman nominated by a major party for Vice President of the United States. It was a real highlight.

[0:40:29.4]

Ruyak: When you were stepping out of the job, you had, at the same time, a really pivotal personal experience going on. Your husband had had a heart attack. Will you revisit that and how the station handled it and how you decided that needed to be the end?

[0:40:50.9]

Fein: Well, Larry had had a massive heart attack, he'd lost a third of his heart, in 1975. It was malpractice on the part of Kaiser. They changed the emergency room procedure as a result of Larry's heart attack. He sued Kaiser, and his case went up to the U.S. Supreme Court, *Fein v. Kaiser*. Jim Drennan asked me a couple of times if Larry would be willing to do a story. He was very newsworthy. His was a test case of the new medical malpractice law that took effect in—there was this narrow window when Larry had had his heart attack and he fit into the window of this new medical malpractice act. It was a test case of everything. It took ten years to work its way through the State Court of Appeals and to get to the U.S. Supreme Court, but he did win.

Anyway, he was fine for a while and worked, went back to work, but he had a lot of medical problems as a result, and I asked for a leave of absence in 1986 so that I could spend time with him. We didn't know if he was going to live or die at the time. And they wouldn't give me a leave of absence, so I had to resign.

But after a while, I guess we traveled. We took a trip to China, is what we did. After my trip with Pete Fuentes to China, it was just such an incredible place, I said, "Larry, we have to go," and we did. He was sick and all puffed out from prednisone, but we traveled to China.

Anyway, when I came back, I continued to freelance for Channel 3 for another two years, but I parted company with them when I realized that they were paying me less than they were paying their own photographers, which made me scab labor, and that did not feel good at all. By that time, Langley had left and Bob Jordan was news director, and I said to him, "Either you pay me what you're paying your other photographers or I won't work for you anymore," and that was the end of working at KCRA.

I did work for a short time for, I guess, CalSat, a satellite news company that was broadcasting out of the Senator Hotel. That lasted a year or two. But I continued as a photographer. I have a studio and darkroom at my home, and so I've continued as a still photographer doing all kinds of projects and portraits in my studio and travel photography and fine art photography.

[0:44:06.7]

Ruyak: And Larry's still with you.

[0:44:09.7]

Fein: Two heart transplants. First heart transplant was not a good match, many problems, lots of rejections, lost both of his hips because high doses of prednisone to stop the rejection dissolves bone, so he has two artificial hips. Diabetic because the immunosuppression whacks out your kidneys, and pancreatitis goes along with it. But we have traveled all over the world. He's a survivor, and we have a good life.

[0:44:49.6]

Ruyak: When you look back, do you feel pragmatic about the fact that your career ended the way it did at the time it did? Do you think that's just life, or are you ever angry that after so much invested and the way you loved it, that was the ending?

[0:45:09.2]

Fein: I was grateful to have that incredible experience. I was grateful to get in the door. I worked in television in the absolute heyday of television. Kelly News Company spent a lot of money on news. I had so many small aircraft flights, I can't tell you, to Eureka, to Nevada, to here, to there, anywhere in Northern California or Nevada that news was happening would be either drive there if you could get there or I've chartered a plane. They spent money on news, they spent money on travel, and I was lucky to be in there at that time and able to reap the benefits of it.